FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

25 APRIL 1986

Libya

The "text" of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's 23 April interview with Soviet journalists, broadcast by Tripoli television, included a number of statements by the Libyan leader which were not mentioned in the TASS report on the interview. In the recording broadcast by the television, Al-Qadhdhafi claimed that Libya now deserves to be called "the Great Jamahiriyah" because it "protected" the socialist bloc by intercepting and destroying F-111 aircraft which "might have been on their way to Moscow." He described the NATO leaders as "a species between pigs and humans," asserting that their morals are so low that they cannot be human beings. "We have entered a new phase in which a state has officially decided to kill a head of state," he said, adding that there is "no chance of an understanding" with such an enemy. Tripoli television subsequently announced that Al-Qadhdhafi has sent an "important" message to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, noting that Syria, Algeria, and the PDRY have been informed of its contents. In another development, the chief of staff of the Libyan Navy met with the commander of the Soviet naval group currently visiting Libya, Voice of Greater Arab Homeland radio noted. A report by the UAE paper *AL ITTIHAD* maintained that Libyan air defenses have been strengthened by "very advanced weapons" following contacts between Al-Qadhdhafi and Gorbachev, according to Abu Dhabi radio.

Reaction to Arab Summit Proposal

The Syrian foreign minister stated that Syria is ready to attend an Arab summit at any time and place, Radio Monte Carlo reported. The statement was not mentioned by monitored Syrian media. In the Gulf, Moroccan envoy Ahmed Bensouda disclosed that UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan has welcomed Moroccan King Hassan II's proposal for an emergency summit in Fes, Abu Dhabi radio noted. Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz reaffirmed Iraq's view that an Arab summit should discuss other issues, including Iran's "aggression" against Iraq, before debating the U.S. raid on Libya, according to INA.

Syria

Voice of Lebanon radio cited reports of more bomb explosions in Syria, stating that three explosions rocked the coastal town of Tartus the night of 23 April, causing over 20 casualties. The authorities responded by storming houses and arresting 63 people, the radio added. In another development, "informed" sources in Amman cited by Radio Monte Carlo 25 April stated that President Hafiz al-Asad will visit Jordan "within the next 24 hours."

Lebanon

The Lebanese Forces released 33 kidnapped people in a unilateral "goodwill" gesture, Voice of Lebanon radio announced. Nevertheless, shelling continued across the Muslim-Christian contact lines, according to the radio.

Israel

Prime Minister Shim'on Peres recently renewed his secret contacts with Jordan's King Husayn, *HADASHOT* claimed, adding that Peres may have met with Husayn in France last week.

PLO

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat ratified a decision by the PLO's Supreme Military Council to expel 'Atallah 'Atallah and strip him of all military ranks in the PLA and Palestinian forces, Radio Monte Carlo reported. 'Atallah condemned the decision in remarks broadcast by the radio, claiming that the Military Council is not authorized to issue such "thoughtless" decisions, which should be issued only by a Fatah General Conference. 'Atallah said his "corrective movement" will continue to adhere to democratic methods to get rid of the "tyranny" practiced by 'Arafat, whose policy "is better suited to the running of a ranch than to leading a revolution."

Sudan

TMC Chairman General 'Abd al-Rahman Siwar al-Dhahab handed over the position of Armed Forces commander to Lieutenant General Taj al-Din 'Abdallah Fadl during a 24 April ceremony in Khartoum, SUNA reported. The new commander told the gathering that the army has been harmed by its involvement in politics and he said it will begin a "new march" after handing power over to the people.

Western Sahara

Commenting on the results of recent preliminary and indirect contacts between Moroccan and Saharan representatives in New York, Polisario official Salem Ould Salek stated at a Paris press conference that the Moroccan stand is aimed at obstructing any positive development, Algiers radio reported. Nevertheless, Paris radio broadcast his assertion that "the de facto recognition of the Polisario Front by Morocco is a reality," adding that Polisario hopes this will lead to "real negotiations" between the two sides.

Afghanistan

At a meeting in Khowst District, the defense minister congratulated the Armed Forces on their "major victories" in the area, though he stressed that these victories are "not enough" as the army has been given "major duties" in "completely crushing the counterrevolutionaries," Kabul radio reported. The DRA authorities also announced widespread promotions within the Armed Forces, according to the radio.

FBIS **DAILY REPORT**

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Kabul Announces Mass Military Promotions

LD242233 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] In accordance with the instruction of Babrak Karmal, PDPA Central Committee general secretary and DRA Revolutionary Council president, and in view of the fact that 16th and 17th plenums of the PDPA Central Committee have been assigned the formidable and honorable duties of the defense of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the national independence of Afghanistan against foreign aggression, to our heroic Armed Forces; and in view of the fact that the DRA Armed Forces' officers have been faithfully discharging their duty of struggle against the counterrevolutionary bands with self-sacrifice, courage, and bravery and have inflicted crushing and deadly blows on the rebel bands, and, as earnest sons of the homeland, are accomplishing their historic mission vis-a-vis the homeland and revolution, the PDPA Central Committee Politburo and the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council, have decided in honor of the 8th anniversary of the April Revolution to promote the DRA Armed Forces officers who are due fo promotion from the rank of Lieutenant to Lieutenant Colonel and to the rank of colonial rank:

A. The following catagories irrespective of headroom vacancies provided it does not exceed the rank of Colonel:

Lecturers and teachers who have a high and vocational education and are engaged in teaching in the military educational institutions;

Medical doctors whose have been educated to the level of licence and higher than licence and are working as physicians;

DRA pilots, flight crew, engineers, and flight technicians who are taking practical part in the flight activities.

B. The following catagories irrespective of headroom vacancies provided they do not exceed the rank of senior captain:

The commanders, snipers, drivers of tank and combat armored machines, as well as the drivers of other military vehicles;

The officers of combat and operational companies who have taken active part in combat operations more than a year;

Engineers and technicians of weapons and war equipment who are in the disposal of combat units and have taken part in combat operations;

The operational personnel of the Ministry of State Security;

Paramedical staff and other medical personnel who are discharging their duties in the armed forces hospitals and medical centers [words indistinct].

All those officers-mentioned in paragraphs A and B of the article will get their promotion on condition that they have terminated the specified term of service in the present rank in their professional field and have received a favorable report.

The PDPA Central Committee Politburo and the Presidium of the DRA Revolutionary Council have instructed the ministries of Defense, Internal Affairs, and State Security of the DRA to grant the periodic promotion of the above catagories of officers in honor of 8th anniversary of the glorious April Revolution.

Defense Minister Visits Khowst, Praises Armed Forces

LD242024 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] A glorious meeting was held yesterday in Khowst major district to appreciate the victories and heroism of the DRA Armed Forces during the military operations. The meeting was attended by Major General Nazar Muhammad, candidate member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo and DRA minister of defense; Maj Gen Yasin Sadeqi, secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and head of the Army's political affairs; the assistant to the minister of defense; and a large number of the unit and company generals and commanders.

At the end of this meeting the DRA minister of defense congratulated the courageous personnel of the Armed Forces and the toiling people of Khowst District, on the major victories by the units and companies of the Armed Forces in (Pasa), Kateh, and Zhawar regions; and he wished them further victories for the complete defeat of the counterrevolutionaries and the creation of a peaceful atmosphere in the country.

He said that crushing the counterrevolutionaries in Khowst District and the seizure of a major cache of weapons and ammunition — brought into the country by the Pakistani militarists under the umbrella of criminal U.S. imperialism and other imperialist countries — by you, the proud soldiers and courageous officers and NCO's, displays the full strength of our revolutionary army. However, these victories are not enough. The 17th PDPA Central Committee plenum has given major duties to the DRA Army in completely crushing the counterrevolutionaries. I hope you accomplish your future duties with such victories and provide conditions for peaceful work and [words indistinct].

General Abdul Ghafur spoke about the objective of the military operations in the south of Khowst and the resulting victories. A number of the participants at this meeting spoke briefly about the heroism of the personnel of the Armed Forces in Khowst District.

The minister of defense then presented gifts and merit certificates of the courageous personnel of the units and companies who took part in the combat operations in Khowst.

At the end, the participants visited an exhibition of the weapons, ammunition, and materials seized during the combat operation by the courageous men, NCO's, and officers.

Recent Offensives Against Rebels Detailed

BK250414 Hong Kong AFP in English 0127 GMT 25 Apr 86

[By Dimitri Kochko]

[Text] Islamabad, April 25 (AFP) — Soviet and Afghan troops have launched strong offensives against Afghan rebels in the past weeks, rebel sources here said, in tactics that western diplomats see linked to the upcoming seventh round of indirect negotiations in Geneva between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The Mujahidin guerrillas reported casualties of 125 dead and 220 injured in prolonged fighting with government troops for the key guerrilla base of Zhawar, near Afghanistan's southeastern border with Pakistan.

Guerrilla sources and Pakistani officials said Wednesday that Soviet and Afghan troops had taken the base Sunday and withdrawn Tuesday after suffering heavy casualties in the attack that began on April 4.

Similar offensives have been staged at other points of the Afghan-Pakistani border, as well as along the western border with Iran, which the Mujahidin consider to be "more difficult".

The increased military activity, diplomats here say, is linked to the next round of U.N.-sponsored indirect talks scheduled for May 5 in Geneva between Kabul and Islamabad on a Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.

U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Diego Cordovez, the middleman in the Pakistani-Afghan talks, has said that the seventh round would be "decisive" to a negotiated solution of the Afghan conflict.

President Mohammed Ziaul Haq of Pakistan said Wednesday that the talks "could be decisive", and said he was optimistic.

Afghan authorities also stress the "decisive" character of the Geneva talks, which Soviet sources said were discussed during a visit this week to Moscow by Afghan Premier 'Ali Keshtmand.

In a communique issued Thursday at the end of his visit, Mr. Kesthmand said he had informed Soviet officials about Afghan efforts for "a quick political settlement" of the Afghan question. Such a settlement, the communique said, depends on "putting a full end to all interventions in Afghanistan, armed or otherwise, together with guarantees that such interventions will not reoccur."

The Soviet Union, whose troops have been in Afghanistan since December 1979, has also said it wants a political solution.

Guerrilla source said the Mujahidin had inflicted heavy casualties on the attacking Soviet-Afghan troops during recent fighting.

Jalalluddin Haqqani, the rebel commander of the Zhawar base who is being treated in Pakistan, denied the camp had been taken, confirming rebel losses, but adding that his troops had downed five helicopters and six planes. Mr. Haqqani also said 282 government and Soviet troops had been killed and 300 captured during the clashes.

Radio Kabul said the Zhawar base had been destroyed and all the Mujahidin wiped out.

In Washington, the State Department said Soviet-Afghan forces had failed to capture the key base, which protects a main rebel supply route. The offensives, guerrilla sources and Kabul reports agree, are aimed at cutting off the Mujahidin from outside support.

Other attacks have been launched since March in the northeastern provinces of Nangarhar and Konarha, in the guerrilla-controlled southern city of Qandahar and in Herat, on Afghanistan's western border with Iran.

Nur Ahmad Nur Returns From GDR Congress

LD241108 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari/Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Apr 86

[Text] Nur Ahmad Nur, member of the Politburo and secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, who headed a party delegation visiting Berlin at the invitation of the SED Central Committee to take part in the work of the 11th party congress, returned to Kabul this afternoon. At Kabul Airport he was welcomed by Saleh Mohammad Ziray, member of the Politburo and secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, and deputy head of the party International Relations Department.

After his arrival at Kabul Airport Nur Ahmad Nur highly assessed the work of the congress. In an interview with the BAKHTAR correspondent he said that the congress discussed the prospect of further progress and prosperity of the GDR. He said that the active participation of foreign delegations in the work of the congress was a major and profound sign of international solidarity with the GDR people.

BAKHTAR Comments on Importance of Keshtmand Visit

LD241041 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Kabul, April 23, BAKHTAR — A political commentator of BAKHTAR writes: The official and friendly visit of Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the DRA to the Soviet Union is very important. The fruit of his visit is the signing of economic and commercial agreements as well as an economic protocol for the period of 1986-1990 with the Soviet side.

Since many years the Soviet Union has extended large disinterested economic assistance to the people of Afghanistan. Forty five percent of our state budget are maintained from the projects constructed by the assistance of the Soviet Union. It is worth to mention that seventy five percent industrial products in the state sector are produced in these projects. The role of the Soviet assistance in education, public health, irrigation systems, hydrology, construction and other spheres of the national economy of our country is constructive. The people of Afghanistan believe that this economic agreement will further consolidate the stand of the DRA against the undeclared war of the US imperialism.

The armed counter-revolutionaries which are exported from across the borders inside the DRA commit arson, murder and other subversive operations against our people and land. The people of Afghanistan resolutely defend their land and honour against these lackeys of imperialism and inflict heavy blows on them by every passing day.

During the years passed, Afghans have well realised the fruits of the Soviet assistance to the DRA.

Gandhi States Position on International Terrorism

BK240755 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] The prime minister has said India will not bow down to any country however powerful. In an intervention in the Rajya Sabha during the question hour today, Mr Rajiv Gandhi clarified that in the most recent example of U.S. bombing in Libya, India was the first country to come out with this point of view. This stand gives strength to the Nonaligned Movement.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi was reacting to the members concern over terrorism. They felt that the government should take a firm stand against the terrorists operating from the British soil against India.

The prime minister said the existing methods to curb terrorism are enough. We have to develop international means to combat it. However, it will take time. Meanwhile, we have to protect ourselves from within.

Gandhi Addresses Generals on Army's 'New Image'

BK241640 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] The prime minister has emphasized the need for projecting a new image of the Indian Army as a technogically advanced fighting force. Our training and service condition should ensure that the ablest young persons chose careers in defense, he said.

Addressing the biennial conference of Army commanders in New Delhi today, Mr Rajiv Gandhi cautioned that security is a matter which never permits us to sit back and relax.

Referring to the international situation, he said the 6-nation initiative for nuclear disarmament has received a good response from the people in most countries, but some big powers have not adopted a helpful attitude.

About Punjab, he was optimistic that it would be possible to isolate the hard-core extremists and deal with them effectively. He welcomed the support extended by all sections at the recent meeting of the National Integration Council for maintaining unity and communal harmony.

Earlier, the chief of the Army staff, General K. Sundarji, apprised the prime minister of the state of the Army.

The 6-day conference is being attended by general officers, commanders in chief of all the five Army commands and principal staff officers at the Army Headquarters.

The ministers of state for defense, Mr Arun Singh, and Mr Sukh Ram; the chief of the naval staff, Admiral Tahiliani; and the chief of the air staff, Air Chief Marshal Lafontaine, were among those who attended the inaugural session.

State Minister on Terrorists' Links 'Across Border'

BK240801 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] The interrogation of some terrorists in Punjab has revealed information about their links across the border and also about training and other assistance received by them.

This information was given by the minister of state for internal security, Mr Arun Nehru, in the Rajya Sabha today.

He said nothing specific has yet been known to establish the reported supply of Chinese arms by Bangladesh to Tripura National Volunteers.

The security agencies are maintaining strict vigilance along the border to check infiltration of miscreants.

Mr Nehru told the House that about 8,500 persons were apprehended by the Border Security Force while crossing India-Pakistan border in the last 6 months.

The Rajya Sabha was informed today that there is no confirmation of reports appearing in some sections of the press that China has been aiding the cause of Sikh terrorists.

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr K. R. Narayanan, said during question hour that the Chinese Government has also stated that such reports carried by a few foreign newspapers are false and not worth refuting.

Bhagat Gives Reasons for Nonaligned Libya Visit

AU230958 Rome ANSA in English 0834 GMT 23 Apr 86

[Excerpt] (ANSA) Rome, April 22 — A delegation from the non-aligned nations movement flew to New York on Tuesday to continue a good-will mission which brought it to Tripoli on Sunday to extend the movement's "solidarity" to Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

"We met with Al-Qadhdhafi on Sunday to unveil the decisions taken at the foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi from April 15 to 19 and to express our friendly solidarity to him and the entire Libyan nation following the U.S. aggression", said Indian foreign minister Bali Ram Bhagat.

THE MUSLIM: Arabs, Muslims Must Support Libya

GF240948 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 19 Apr 86 p 3

[Editorial: "Not by Words Alone"]

[Text] Saudi Arabia's condemnation of the United States action against Libya is indeed heartening. The Americans have been trying hard to exploit the differences within the Arab world and to neutralise the moderate states in order to isolate Al-Qadhdhafi. But Saudi Arabia's forthright position is a rebuff to American diplomacy. Hopefully, it will not remain confined to verbal denunciation of aggression against a brother Arab nation.

The need of the hour is unity among the Arabs. The American 'state terrorism' is a threat to all self-respecting small nations and Al-Qadhdhafi should not be left alone to resist this banditry.

Regardless of internal differences, the Arab states must rise to the occasion and help Libya defend its honour and sovereignty.

The Arab states are not lacking in resources and have been spending a lot on odd causes.

Support to Libya is a worthy cause and warrants whole-hearted political and material support, not only by the Arabs but by the entire Muslim world.

PAKISTAN TIMES Editorial on Nonaligned Meeting

GF241105 Rawalpindi THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 20 Apr 86 p 6

[Editorial: "Nonaligned Movement and Afghanistan"]

[Text] Pakistan Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Ali Khan, addressing the plenary session of the Coordinatimg Bureau of non-aligned countries at New Delhi, has sought a NAM [Non-aligned Movement] consensus once again against Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan and has surveyed Pakistan's efforts since 1979 to seek a political solution to the threat to regional peace it represents.

As a result of Pakistan's persistent efforts at organising an international climate of opinion on the issue, the UN Secretary General undertook an intermediary role by setting up an indirect dialogue at Geneva which has made steady progress.

Sahabzada Yaqub Ali Khan has informed the NAM bureau at New Delhi of the cooperation that his country has offered to the UN efforts at mediation at Geneva.

At the forthcoming seventh round of talks at Geneva, Pakistan and Afghanistan will thrash out the modalities of the fourth instrument of the projected agreement relating to the time-table of the Soviet troop withdrawal which will bring the Afghanistan dispute to a close.

The Nonaligned Movement is one of the many international forums which have endorsed the Pakistani position on Afghanistan and thus exercised moral pressure on the Soviet Union in favour of restraint and withdrawal.

The NAM forum is of crucial importance to Pakistan because it includes within its ranks a large number of countries friendly to the Soviet Union.

Sahabzada Yaqub Ali Khan's speech sets out a view that is equidistant between the two superpowers and is critical of the conduct of both from the point of view of the majority of the states in the world seeking a consensus away from superpower involvements.

At the last NAM summit, which was held at New Delhi, the opinion which developed and which was reflected in the NAM declaration, called upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in order to allow the UN to put into operation the agreed policy of normalisation that would bring sovereignty and peace to the Afghan nation.

Since then a lot of developments have taken place within the Geneva dialogue and outside it. As the Pakistan Foreign Minister pointed out, the proximity talks finalised three-fourths of the text of the agreement under which Pakistan would recognise the Kabul regime, give guarantees of noninterference and collaborate on the return of Afghan refugees to their homes.

Over time, the rigidity of the Soviet stand also appears to have undergone a change and the last congress of the Soviet Communist Party conceded that the crisis in Afghanistan was a bleeding wound.

Soviet leadership has time and again expressed its willingness to bring the imbroglio to a peaceful end and thus solve history's worst refugee problem.

The NAM forum is a bridge between nations that is free of superpower bias and its endorsement is of utmost value. If all the parties involved in the Afghanistan problem are committed to the same final objective, that is, a peaceful conclusion, then let them work sincerely towards it.

If the main stumbling-block is a lack of trust that characterises all East-West questions, then the NAM forum should make a clear statement about it, safeguarding the interests of its two members, Afghanistan and Pakistan, as against the superpower interests and rivalries that prolong conflicts in order to score strategic points against each other.

SRI LANKA

TULF Leaders Meet With India's Bhandari on Proposals

BK231557 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1441 GMT 23 Apr 86

[Text] Briefing newsmen on 23 April 1986, the official spokesman said that a three member delegation of TULF led by its secretary general, Amrithalingam, met Romesh Bhandari today to discuss proposals presented to the prime minister last week by Sri Lankan Foreign Minister A.C.S. Hameed regarding ethnic issues in Sri Lanka.

The delegation is presently meeting G. Parthasarathy, chairman, Policy Planning Committee; and A.P. Venkateswaran, foreign secretary. They will be meeting P. Chidambaram, minister of state for personnel and administrative reforms, tomorrow.

Replying to queries he said that no dates have been fixed for Bhandari's visit to Colombo.

Colombo on Talks

BK231203 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 23 Apr 86

[Text] The TULF leadership has been summoned to New Delhi by the Indian Government for talks with senior officials about the latest proposals for settling the Tamil problem. Messrs Amirthalingam, Sivasithamparam and Sampanatham were due to fly to Delhi for talks with the new Indian foreign secretary, Mr Venkateswaran; Mr Parthasarathy, who heads the Policy Planning Commission at the Indian Foreign Office; and Mr Bhandari, who is Prime Minister Gandhi's troubleshooter on the Sri Lanka question.

During the last few days, the international news agencies quoted TULF leader Mr Amirthalingam as saying that he attached little credence to the new proposals. He was later reported to have rejected the proposals outright.

Meetings between the TULF and the Indian Government in Delhi will be followed by the TULF Politburo reviewing the position. This meeting will probably take place in Madras.

Tamil Group Claims Responsibility for Dam Burst

BK241154 Colomob International Service in English 1045 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] A report from New Delhi by the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA says that an unknown Sri Lankan Tamil terrorist group has claimed responsibility for the Kantalai reservoir breach which killed several people and left thousands homeless.

The news agency quoted the Eelam Revolutionary Communist Party, ERCP, as saying in a statement issued in the south Indian city of Trivandrum that it had carried out the breach of the Kantalai reservoir to weaken the Sri Lankan economy.

The leader of the group, (T.K. Balasubramaniam), was quoted by PTI as saying that the group had also wanted to divert the attention of the Sri Lankan Army from Tamil-dominated areas in the island. He claimed that the Kantalai disaster had cut off road and rail communications between Colombo and Trincomalee.

PTI said that this was the first time that the Eelam Revolutionary Communist Party had issued a statement. Tamil exiles in India said they were not aware of the group.

8 Killed in Explosion at Petroleum Complex 23 April

BK241136 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] An explosion ripped through the storage complex of the petroleum corporation at Anuradhapura yesterday, setting off a huge fire. The Anuradhapura depot, located close to the railway station, stores large stocks of petroleum and is the central distribution point for the northern and north-central region.

Reports say that two persons alleged to have caused this act of sabotage were arrested at Medawachchiya. They are suspected of being terrorists.

The (Rajarata) service of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation said that the explosion had destroyed three [word indistinct] which had arrived from the north. Some machinery and equipment were also destroyed. No damage was caused to the main storage tank. The (Rajarata) service says that eight people were killed as a result of the explosion. Only three of the dead have been identified.

The Army, the Air Force, and police have been deployed to strengthen security in the entire region. The damage caused to the petroleum storage complex has been estimated at 3.5 million rupees.

EROS Group Claims Responsibility

BK241328 Hong Kong AFP in English 1310 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] New Delhi, April 24 (AFP) — A Sri Lankan Tamil separatist group has claimed responsibility for Wednesday's explosion in a petrol dump in northern Sri Lanka which killed eight people, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA News Agency said Thursday.

A spokesman for the militant Eelam Revolutionry Organization (EROS) told PTI in Madras that the sabotage was part of the group's plan to cripple the Sri Lankan economy in retaliation for alleged killings of Tamils by government forces.

V. Balakumar said that the explosion at the underground petrol dump at Anuradhapura caused "heavy damage." The group claimed eight deaths, but reports from Colombo earlier had put the toll at six.

A section of Sri Lanka's 2.5 million Tamils are leading an often violent campaign for autonomy in the country's north and east,

but the militant leadership is based in Madras, capital of India's Tamil Nadu State.

Security Forces Kill 12 Tamil Guerrillas

BK250718 Hong Kong AFP in English 0714 GMT 25 Apr 86

[Text] Colombo, April 25 (AFP) — Sri Lankan security forces killed 12 Tamil separatist guerrillas in clashes in the northeastern district of Trincomalee on Friday, National Security ty Ministry sources said.

The sources in the ministry said the guerrillas had been slain during a security forces operation.

The sources could not say immediately exactly where the operation had been conducted, or against which of the several guerrilla groups campaigning for an independent Tamil state in the north and east it had been mounted. The killings brought the official death toll among Tamil guerrillas in two days of fighting to 23.

Seven guerrillas were killed and 51 suspects arrested when the security forces mounted a dawn raid on a hideout of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on Thursday near the village of Thampalagam.

Two other guerrillas caught unawares committed suicide by swallowing cyanide capsules, the sources said.

In another raid in the eastern district of Amparai, two more guerrillas were killed in an army raid on a hideout, ranking security forces sources said.

Majlis Speaker Warns U.S. on Military Action

LD251030 Tehran IRNA in English 1010 GMT 25 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA — Tehran's prayer leader Friday warned the United States about a possible military attack on the Islamic Republic and said bombing of Iranian cities would only increase popular resistance.

"If our people know they would have to face U.S. (troops), our Armed Forces will increase from several hundred thousand to several million" Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said. United States officials signalled this week consideration of military action against the Islamic Republic if it was found involved in the so-called terrorist activities.

But Rafsanjani warned "If you do such a thing, which of course you do not dare to, you will know the real meaning of terror in the world." "Do not threaten" he said, "come, reform yourself. Until Israel exists in the region and you support it and until four million Palestinians are homeless, there would be no security." [sentenced as received]

The statements were made as Rafsanjani addressed the Friday prayers in Tehran's university campus where country's policy makers speak about the social state of affairs in the politico-religious gathering every week.

Rafsanjani accused the United States and its allies of conducting direct and indirect acts of terror around the world particularly in Lebanon, Iran, and Nicaragua.

"Everybody knows terrorism is bad. For this reason they (Americans) implement their policies under the cloak of anti-terrorism" he said. "We do not want terror in the world either... but who are the real terrorists?"

Both the United States and France support Iran's terrorist organizations which conduct assassinations and bombings aimed at damaging the government here, he said.

"These gentlemen who kill ordinary people and explode bombs in Iran live in the security of the French and American police. Are they not terrorists?" Rafsanjani asked.

Rafsanjani said recent U.S. moves against the so-called terrorists including Libya would bring no result. "What did you get by your killings in Libya? This will only increase resistance. This will only encourage individuals."

He cited an example to say resistance of Iranian people hardened under Iraqi attacks on cities. "Reagan should send an envoy to the city of Dezful to see how the people there are putting up" he said. Dezful in western Iran has been the target of more than one hundred Iraqi ground-to-ground missiles but its population continue everyday life in a show of resistance.

Rafsanjani regularly conducts the Friday prayers. During the week he heads the Islamic Majlis (parliament). He is known as one of the top policy makers of the country.

On recent press claims that Iran has been trying to illegally obtain U.S.-made weapons, Rafsanjani ridiculed the accusations. "I have never heard of a dealer who could smuggle advanced war planes, as if they were raisins. Where could they find air planes to sell to us?" he asked.

Press reports claimed more than dollars 2 billion worth of U.S.-made weapons, including jet fighters, bombers and tanks, were to have been sold to Iran in an illegal deal.

"If we have the power to bring dollars 2.5 billion of advanced weapons to Iran, you (in Washington) should be better dead" Rafsanjani said.

"We have nothing to hide. When ever we find American weapons, we will buy. Everybody knows Shah's army was American and it needs equipment. In the course of war we obtained some second hand. If there is more we will buy with just prices. We have only ordered our agents not to buy from Israel because it is boycotted" he said.

Press reports which claim Israelis including an Israeli general were involved in the illegal deal is an indication how unpopular the Zionist state is in world public opinion, Rafsanjani said.

The reports "Implicitly condemn relations with them (Israelis). relations with them is ugly. Nations do not want these (relations)" he added.

In response to the statements, Muslim believers chanted "Death to America-death to Russia" slogans shaking their fists in the air. Several units of civil servant para-military volunteers sat among their rows.

According to Islamic tradition the first of the two-part sermon deals with ethics while the second is on domestic and international politics.

Tehran prayer leaders also deliver a short talk in Arabic as the sermon comes to an end. Thousands of Arab-speaking Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran and practicing Muslims across the Middle East hear the sermons on radio.

To mark the birth of Mahdi the twelfth imam of the household of the prophet (May peace be upon him) Rafsanjani discussed Islam's view on the coming of the world's saviour.

Shi'ite Muslims believe Imam Mahdi who lived 11 centuries ago is an extraordinary personality who is still alive and will return one day to fight unjustice and create a society based on divine law.

Rafsanjani said Muslims should practice their religious obligations to prepare for the coming. "All Muslims are responsible towards reforming the society... the Muslim nation should unite against unjustice" he said.

But he criticised some Muslims for believing that they should keep aloof from social activity because Imam Mahdi was not present among them.

Reagan Interview Shows U.S. 'Helpless, Despondent'
LD241255 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1055 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Station commentary]

[Text] Reports still being published on the results of the U.S. fighter planes' savage attack on Libyan residential areas contain the U.S. new policy to confront freedom-seeking and revolutionary nations.

Although U.S. allies, that is West European countries, initially attempted to portray themselves as more or less against U.S. policy in this matter, the latest EEC foreign ministers' decision to expel Libyan diplomats shows the extent of their adherence to Washington's policies. And, among those countries, the British Government, which has overtaken the other Western allies in its cooperation with Reagan, had an active hand in the attack against Libya.

Some reports detail the wishes of U.S. allies regarding the attack against Libya, despite their remarks. On the other hand, the existing evidence, namely, Reagan's recent interview -- which clearly raises the point of the possibility of U.S. attacks on other Middle-Eastern regions -- shows that the Washington Administration is helpless and despondent in the face of aware, anti-imperialist nations and that it consequently has adopted a new policy of overt military aggression. Undoubtedly, the Reagan administration's recent action against Libya has prepared the groundwork for that administration's future actions.

Meanwhile, the pitiful reactions by Arab countries, except for a number of progressive and anti-imperialist ones, can be viewed as the reason for the strengthening of the U.S. stance. Countries with extensive economic and diplomatic relations with West European countries and the United States do not even limit themselves to verbal condemnation in such circumstances. Instead many reactionary Arab regimes kept very quiet following the recent U.S. invasion of Libya, which proves their endorsement of the U.S. aggression against Libya.

Of course, verbal condemnations are merely for reasons of pretence and made out of fear of public opinion. As George Bush declared after his recent trip to the Persian Gulf region, they [reactionary Arab regimes] are in favor of a U.S. invasion against progressive and anti-U.S. regimes in the region.

It must be asked: Could not the Middle Eastern countries expel Western diplomats to put pressure on the United States and its allies? Could they not ban the purchase of a number of necessary goods from the EEC and the United States? There are many other ways of fighting imperialism and giving it a taste of its own medicine. Refraining from doing so would only encourage the violators of the rights of nations.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that as has been seen the past few days, the nations are prepared to fight the United States and its allies with all their might. No doubt as history has shown, the nations will not wait for decisions by their governments forever; rather, they will choose the right course and pursue it. There is no glory higher than this and it is solely due to the relentless struggles of the Muslims since the start of this decade, which has led to the defeat of all U.S. plans in the region.

Tehran Arabic Comments on Countering U.S. 'Threats'
GF241851 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Station commentary]

[Text] The new U.S. threats to the Islamic Republic, which came from the leader of world terrorism, Ronald Reagan, did not surprise anyone. Nor did these threats frighten any one in Islamic Iran.

For more than 6 years, our people have said: Welcome to the U.S. armies if they want to try their luck in the land of Islam. By threatening to strike Tehran, Reagan wanted to confuse cards and use the aggression card in a losing game. His threats brought him to a precipitous abyss. Our people have for years been waiting to teach the aggressors a lesson they will never forget. Reagan is repeating the scenario of the terrorist aggression on Libya, but this time near the coast of the Islamic Republic.

The commander of the naval forces has announced that U.S. destroyers are acting provocatively outside the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic near the Strait of Hormuz. The commander warned that he would issue instructions to hit any U.S. unit trying to enter our territorial waters.

If we link these provocative acts to threats by U.S. President Ronald Reagan, the dimensions and background of U.S. intentions against the Islamic Republic of Iran will become clear to us. At any rate, let the Americans know that the Strait of Hormuz is not the Gulf of Sidra; the Persian Gulf is not the Mediterranean; and any attempt to launch an aggression will turn the region into a flame that will burn U.S. pride and arrogance. If the United States has forgotten the outcome of its blatant aggression against the Islamic Republic on more than one occasion, it should remember the outcome of its aggression against the Muslim people in Libya — an outcome which the U.S. memory will never forget. The U.S. aggression, whatever its for,m nd destructive force, will ultimately serve the Islamic nation in many ways:

1. It will strengthen solidarity among the Muslim nation in countering the U.S. danger and will give the Muslim people the opportunity to unify their ranks;
2. It will strengthen the Muslim nation's ability to resist aggression of any kind during the course of time. The nation which faces challenges becomes strong and able to achieve victory;

3. It will make the regimes tied to the United States which control parts of the Muslim world collapse under the hammers of the people of the Muslim nation.

The front Washington is going to start against the Muslim nation will expand to all who support the U.S. policy. Hence, threatening to carry out an aggression — or the possibility of launching an aggression against the Muslim people in Iran —

will be another opportunity for the Muslim nation to unite against the rancorous arrogant crusader onslaught.

Musavi: Alleged Arms Sales Attempt To Mislead Public

LD241638 Tehran IRNA in English 1533 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi said here Thursday that *[THE] GLOBE's* arrogant powers have claimed Iran's purchase of U.S.-made arms in order to deviate public opinion from the Islamic Republic's victories at war fronts.

Addressing members of the Islamic Association and managers of the Roads and Transport Ministry who were to leave for fronts, Musavi said the "Enemy hatched this plot to claim that the victory of the Muslim combatant was based on weapons not faith."

"If U.S.-made weapons could bring victory", Musavi said "the previous regime which was fully backed by the U.S. would have remained and Saddam too, could have achieved victory in the early days of his war" against Iran.

Foreign press reports Tuesday claimed a group of people influencing a retired Israeli general were indicted on charge of trying to sell Iran more than $two billion worth of U.S.-made weapons.

Prime minister also said Iran's liberation of the port city of Al-Faw foiled a conspiracy to create a war of attrition. But "in order to prevent new moves, the enemy has resorted to new plots namely suspicious political visits of the U.S. agents to the region" he added. Musavi noted that Iranian combatants have proved that their faith is more effective that advanced and modern weapons of the Iraqi enemy.

Khomeyni Receives Leaders on Islamic Festival

LD251259 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Apr 86

[Text] On the happy and auspicious birthday anniversary of the 12th holy imam — May our lives be sacrificed in his cause! — President of the Republic Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi, and a number of the nation's officials were received in audience today by Imam Khomeyni. They congratulated the imam of the Islamic nation on the occasion of this great Islamic festival.

Khamene'i Stresses Nondependence on Oil Income

LD241712 Tehran IRNA in English 1702 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — President 'Ali Khamene'i said here Thursday world arrogant powers thought reduction in oil income could deprive the Islamic Republic of Iran from revenue. But, he said, the Islamic Republic enjoys various sources, including agriculture, heavy industries, and mines to get its foreign exchange.

He added that if OPEC member countries had cut their oil sale to industrial countries even for a short time, the plot to bring down oil prices would have been foiled.

Over production of some of oil producing countries and the glut in the world markets have caused oil prices to fall rapidly during the current year.

Khamene'i said arrogant powers are conspiring to weaken the organization of petroleum exporting countries and drive down the oil price.

The president made the statements in a meeting with theologians on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Imam Mahdi (A.S.). the twelfth imam.

Referring to the recent U.S. aggression against Libya, the president said that this country was considered a serious threat to U.S. interests in the region.

The Washington government launched its attack on Libya to prevent the Islamic movement from growing throughout the region, he said.

Khamene'i said solidarity of the progressive Muslim states has dealt severe blows to the U.S., since the victory of the 1979 Islamic revolution of Iran.

Majlis Speaker Meets With Montazeri in Qom

LD241851 Tehran IRNA in English 1827 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — Majlis speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani met Rev. Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri in Qom Thursday. Different issues of the country were discussed in the meeting.

Further Reportage on Meeting of Governors-General

Interior Minister Announces Resolutions

LD241318 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Following the end of the seminar of the country's governors-general Mr Mohtashami, interior minister, addressing a press, radio and TV conference, recalled the results and consequences of that seminar.

Describing the tasks of governors-general in the provinces and their tasks in advancing the cause of the Islamic revolution and also reading the behests of Grand Ayatollah Montazeri addressed to the governors-general, he emphasized paying greater attention to society's meek classes and farmers and said: One of the problems of farmers in various parts of the country is the land problem; and for this reason the governors-general participating in this seminar, in a letter humbly addressed to the imam of the Islamic nation, called on the imam to point out the fundamental position of land.

In connection with the Interior Ministry's cooperation in connection with the problem of the imposed war, the interior minister said: This ministry has always placed one-fourth of the powers and capabilities of the municipalities, governorates and district offices at the disposal of the fronts. Governors-general all over the country have expressed their readiness to go to the fronts.

In connection with the problem of reprehensible deeds, Mr Mohtashami also said: The Islamic revolution shall deal with this U.S. political phenomenon and shall not permit the strengthening of such moves. A draft law is being worked out at the joint session of the three powers — the executive, the legislative and judiciary — which, after being approved by the Islamic Consultative Assembly, will enable the executive power to act in accordance with its legal powers.

In conclusion, Mr Mohtashami announced the most important resolutions adopted by the joint session of the council of government and the governors-general as follows:

Securing the necessary cadres for the deprived regions;

Specifying the position of the committed forces of the Interior Ministry and affiliated departments;

Securing the necessary funds for the economic mobilization headquarters throughout the country;

Approval of the executive regulations of Article 16 of the Budgetary Law for the year 1365 [current Iranian year ending on 20 March 1987];

Setting up a committee made up of the members of several ministries for the purpose of utilizing Article 3 of the current year's budget and the alternate participation of two governors-general in the Council of Government in order to inform the Council of Ministers of the latest developments in their place of office.

Montazeri Addresses Islam and Oppressed Seminar

GF240619 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Excerpts] Two days before the birthday anniversary of Imam Mahdi — may God expedite his return — called the international day of the oppressed, participants in the seminar Islam and the Oppressed yesterday met with Grand Ayatollah Montazeri. The seminar is being arranged by the propaganda office of the Qom theological center.

During this meeting Grand Ayatollah Montazeri explained the final goal of human creation, which is to reach a supreme moral standard through communications with the Lord, who is the all-powerful.

He stressed: The main reason for sending prophets to us was to fight against the principles of control and aggression which have been part of human nature since the first day of creation. A group of people therefore thought themselves superior and better than others, because of race and other things, to gain power and wealth, although other people were equal to them when they were created. They became aggressors in the face of God Almighty and established the principles of cruelty and oppression against humans in the history of mankind.

Grand Ayatollah Montazeri then commented on ways to combat oppression: The way to fight the spirit of aggression and oppression and to help the oppressed is not to give, for example, a small amount of financial aid to the downtrodden. The real way to support them is to follow the path of the aggressors from the first day of history when they came and crushed the dignity of humans. The holy Koran says this about the pharaohs who used to oppress the downtrodden. We have to return the oppressed masses their original dignity which they lost because of devilish perseverance and corrupt propaganda launched by the aggressive powers. Because of this the oppressed lost their holy and human characteristics. They have to believe that others are not superior to or different from them except in piety and their communications with God who is the all-powerful.

If we can accomplish this important moral task, the people will be awakened and aware and they will find the way to fight against the corrupt aggressive powers.

Ayatollah Montazeri stressed: In the Iranian Islamic revolution, the main secret recipe of victory was that the leadership of the revolution could give back to the people their original dignity and give them self-confidence and willpower to rely on their own holy character. In all religious and political matters the leadership gave the people awareness. This is the meaning of the "revolution's export" which we talk about. We want to make the masses aware so that they may find their own way to fight the corrupt.

He stressed: What makes us hopeful is that the Islamic revolution in Iran on the one hand has created such awareness and self-confidence among the people of Iran that the world aggressors' propaganda has absolutely no effect. Quite the opposite: Day by day, the people become more and more aware of the revolution's and Islam's purity and they believe in this. On the other hand, this revolution has shaken other peoples and has kindled a hope in them for release from the control of the aggressors by Islamic and Koranic teachings.

One sees in corners of the world, like Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, and other places, how the level of political and religious growth in the people increases day by day and how the Islamic movement is growing and blossoming in the world.

This same growth and the Islamic movement in the world is, God willing, a beginning for the appearance for the Mahdi — may God bless his spirit — and this is the duty of all classes of people to raise the level of our own and others' religious, cultural, political, and military readiness, so that if God is willing, the circumstances would be right for the Mahdi to appear so that he would raise the banner of Islamic justice throughout the world.

Ambassador to Nicaragua Expresses Support

LD241857 Tehran IRNA in English 1701 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — The Islamic Republic's ambassador to Nicaragua Mohammad Peyrovi met President Daniel Ortega in Managua Thursday to express Iranian support for his country against U.S. imperialism. President Ortega in

return thanked him for the support and expressed hope that he would visit Tehran in a near future.

Majlis Passes Law Defining President's Duties

LD212329 Tehran IRNA in English 1550 GMT 20 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — The Majlis (Islamic Consultative Assembly) met here Sunday and approved one article of a bill on presidential responsibilities and authority. The article was approved after the second reading. At the session, Majlis deputies spoke for and against the bill and then listened to the president's senior adviser, Mustafa Mir Salim who expressed his views on the bill.

The deputies deleted two articles from the bill but approved one on the basis of which, and according to the 127th Article of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the president should be informed of the agenda and date of the cabinet sessions.

Article Number 127 of the constitutional law of the Islamic Republic of Iran says that the Council of Ministers shall meet presided over by the president if he so deems necessary. The bill also calls on the government to inform the president of any law to be given to the Majlis in order to provide him with opportunity to express his views on it. The deputies also strongly condemned the recent U.S. aggression on Libya. The Majlis will meet again on Tuesday.

Armenian Community Marks 1915 Massacre

LD241649 Tehran IRNA in English 1606 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — Armenian community in Iran Thursday held ceremonies in its churches and other places of gathering to mark the 24 April 1915 massacre of Armenians.

In central churches of Tehran and Esfehan, chief priests spoke on the tragedy as thousands packed the buildings and the courtyards. Banners in condemnation of the massacre hang on the walls. One banner also called for the removal of NATO military bases from Armenia.

Church officials said a caravan of goods collected by the 100,000 strong religious community is to be sent to the war fronts.

Kurds, Opposition Group Attack Iraqi Army

LD242056 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] A Central News Unit report, citing reliable sources inside Iraqi territory, reads: The Iraqi Kurdish Muslim peshmergas ambushed a motorized column on the Diyana-Dukan highway this week, and destroyed several army vehicles belonging to the Iraqi regime. They succeeded in killing at least 10 of that regime's troops, including an officer named Rashid 'Imadi, and wounded another group.

Another report from Iraq reads: The hezbollahi forces affiliated to the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq planted a mine on the highway of the (Belizian) military base and destroyed at least one Iraqi army vehicle. During these operations seven Iraqi military men were killed and another group were wounded.

Relief Teams Transfer Wounded Iraqis From Warfronts

LD241954 Tehran IRNA in English 1205 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Ahvaz, April 24, IRNA — Iranian relief teams continue efforts to transfer wounded Iraqi soldiers from the Salt Lake in Iraq's southern Al-Faw Peninsula to safe places behind the front lines. In recent fighting between Iran's Muslim combatants and Iraq's Ba'th forces along the Al-Faw-Umm Qasr road thousands of Iraqi soldiers from brigades 503, 96, 101, 102, 421, 99 have been killed or wounded.

POW Saleh Alvan Salim, from the Second Battalion of Brigade 503, with serious wounds in his legs, said he lay in battle field for 24 hours before help arrived. "Iraqi forces did not dare to come and get me. I lay there until Islamic combatants found me and transfered me behind the fronts" he said. Other POWS said most of the personnel of the 503th brigade were killed, wounded or taken captive and only a few managed to flee.

Islamic forces of Iran launched their "Val-Fajr-8" offensive in Iraqi Al-Faw Peninsula on 9 February and liberated an oil port there.

Journal Reports Iraqi MIA's Buried in Mass Graves

LD242157 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] The Arabic-language publication *AL-'AMAL AL-ISLAMI* reports: North of the (Mamalih) region near Basra, the Iraqi regime has buried large numbers of bodies of Iraqi troops in mass graves while entering their names in the list of those missing.

According to a Central News Unit report *AL-'AMAL AL-ISLAMI* added: More than 2 months after the beginning of the "Val-Fajr-8" operations initiated by Iranian forces, many Iraqi families are still looking for a trace of their children but the Iraqi regime is evading answering their queries by various means. The publication added: The mass graves also contain the bodies of tens of Iraqi soldiers and officers who were returned to Iraq and executed after seeking asylum in Kuwait.

Further on Volunteers, Convoys Departing for Fronts

Units From Esfahan, Qazvin

LD242053 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Summary] Yesterday afternoon the first Labbayk ya Imam [O imam, I respond to your call] convoy, comprising five specialist combat divisions from the mobilization unit of Esfahan's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps left for the battlefronts of the war against the Zionist enemy.

According to a report from the Central News Unit, the fourth convoy of Karbala' marchers from Qazvin left for the battlefronts yesterday afternoon amid an enthusiastic send off by this town's people. The dispatched forces of Qazvin include the popular volunteer warriors, technical experts, and second time dispatch combatants.

400 Students, Medical Team Depart

LD242057 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0230 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Yesterday, 400 students of Esfahan University left for the battlefronts. According to a report from the Central News Unit, these students joined the convoy named Labbayk ya Imam [O Imam, I respond to your call] and after a parade in streets of the university campus, were seen off by the university's chancellor, lecturers, and other students.

Also yesterday, a medical team, comprising 170 physicians, paramedical staff, relief groups, and medical students of Esfahan University, named the convoy of servants to those who have responded to the imam's call, left the relief treatment headquarters of Esfahan Province for the war zones.

Basij Troops From Shiraz

LD242305 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Excerpts] In response to decree by the imam of the nation, this afternoon hundreds of Basij personnel from units of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps departed from the Basij centers of Shiraz for the warfronts.

The fourth convoy of Karbala' wayfarers from (Kamiaran) District also left for the warfronts this morning.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Successes in "Val-Fajr-8" Sector

LD241716 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] According to a report from the Khatam ol-Anbiya' Headquarters, the center for the joint operations of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps and the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in continuation of the relentless combat of the blasphemy-smashers of Islam's army in the "Val-Fajr-8" operational sector, this morning the anti-tank units of the ground forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, in the course of a patrol and reconnaissance operations, in the north of the Al-Faw-Umm Qadr axis, succeeded, in addition to killing tens of the troops of the defeated army of Iraq, in setting on fire two tanks and a large quantity of weapons and arms carried by them, destroying them completely.

40 Iraqis Killed

LD241725 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Early this morning, five BMP personnel carriers carrying Ba'thist forces along the Basra-Abu al-Khasib axis, came under the fire of the Islamic forces and were destroyed. Around 40 of the Ba'thist forces were killed or injured due to the destruction of the five personnel-carriers. According to IRNA, during the past 24 hours the Islamic forces executed heavy fire on enemy positions near Abu al-Khasib military zone west of the Arvand River destroying two long-range artillery pieces, three heavy machineguns and five enemy trenches. Enemy engineering activity near the military zone of Abu al-Khasib in Iraq, was halted.

Communique No 2,450

LD241842 Tehran IRNA in English 1817 GMT 24 Apr 86

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — Iran's jet fighters bombed an Iraqi troops concentration center in Shahabi Post at 10:30 GMT Thursday inflicting irreparable damages on it. All planes returned to their bases safely, according to a military communique here Thursday.

The communique number 2450 released by the joint staff command of the armed forces said Iranian navy intercepted and inspected three merchant ships in Hormuz Strait Wednesday. The ships set sail once it was known they carried no Iraqi-bound goods.

Artillery fire of the Iranian combatants in northwestern fronts destroyed Iraqi positions and supply routes and set fire to several miliatry vehicles and one munition depot of theirs, said the command. Iranian forces dispatched patrols to the region to check movement of Iraqi infantry units and that of their personnel carriers. The combatants also used their defensive resources to stand against Iraqi forces in Sayyid Khan, the command said. Anti-aircraft units of the Islamic Republic thwarted most Iraqi air raids on northwestern regions forcing all their planes to flee from Iran's air space, the communique added.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire between Iranian forces and the Ba'thists continued sporadically in western fronts which had more intensity in Sumar, Halaleh, Anjirah and Nowsud. Some 20 Iraqis were killed and one munition depot, three military carriers and at least seven different bunkers were set ablaze in the region. A unit of Iraqi forces was to infiltrate Iranian positions in Sumar late Wednesday when its advance was repulsed by heavy artillery fire of the Muslim combatants, said the command.

Economic-industrial installations of the Iraqi cities of Banmil and Naft Khaneh were under continuous Iranian long-range artillery fire Wednesday, the communique concluded.

In another development from Khatam ol-Anbiya' Headquarters Muslim forces of the Islamic republic, during patrol in the north of Al-Faw-Umm Qasr axis, killed tens of Iraqi troops and set fire to two tanks and a good amount of munitions.